HUNTING IN WYOMING.

FROM FT. M'KINNEY TO POWDER RIVER FORK.

Stories of the Stage Road—The Feeding Ground of the Antelope—Chasing a Deer at the Drop of a Hat—A Tenderfoot's Luck.

Endurance of a Wounded Antelope.

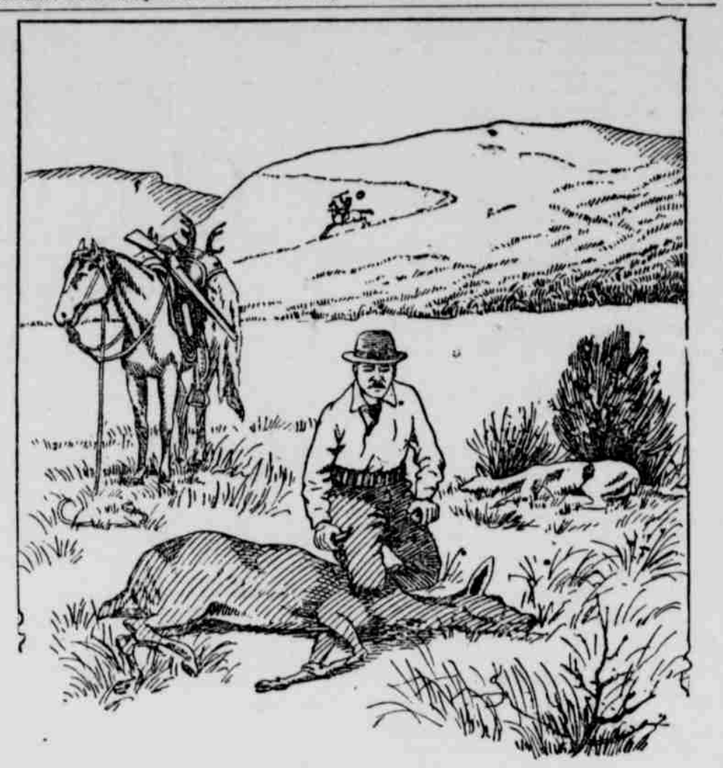
We had been enjoying the hospitality of Colonel J. J. Van Horn, the commandant at Fort McKinney, writes Charles G. Nixon in the Chicago Inter-Ocean. Up to six months ago Fort McKinney was the most remote frontier post, being over 200 miles from the railway; now the distance has been reduced one-half. In the surroundings contributing to comfort, amid so much good taste showing the handiwork of refined and ingenious woman, one could hardly realize that we were 700 miles from the nearest city, Omaha; that the ladies of the post had been accustomed to do their shopping entirely through the problematical medium of a price-list, with an express company as a messenger. You women of cities think of being denied the privilege of overhauling shelves of silks carrying off dozens of samples, and hovering about Monday's "bargain counters" as thick as leaves in Valombrosa! The wives and daughters of the military are brought up in a more heroic school of denial, but one that is more satisfactory in results, judging from the genuine comforts of household equipment, the science of cookery, and the good taste displayed in toilets.

Reconnoissance nos moutons—we were invited to engage in a hunt, and Frank Grouard, chief of scouts, the hero of a hundred hair-breadth escapes by flood and field, was called in for consultation. We had a wild longing to scale the heights of the Big Horn and track the grizzly to his lair, but the scout "sized us up" and intimated that we had better keep out of the mountains and chase the festive deer and antelope. Surely we were in the hands of our friends; we wisely yielded without debate. Early next morning a cavalcade left the beautiful plateau of Fort McKinney, lying in the shadow of the snow capped Big Horn, and started south towards the breaks of the Powder River. It was in charge of Capt. G. L. Scott, of the Sixth Cavalry.

Our first camp was thirty miles down the old stage road from Douglas to Fort Custer, at Harris Ranch, the scene of Captain Burke's (Eighteenth Infantry) fight in 1869. Not over a decade ago the whole country hereabouts was the hunting ground of the Indians. The renegade white man was nearly as bad as the redskin, and the stage was frequently held up in the good old times. The ranch house is a long, low log structure; the store or bar pre-empts the larger portion of the building, and the annex is the dining-room where tranients are treated. The front door is as heavy as the side walls and has chain locks, a device to furnish the man on the inside some advantage over his visitors. It is historic, like the doors of the Theban Temple, but instead of hieroglyphics it is filled full of bullets and buckshot cards of visitors and reciprocal compliments from the inmates. The most sensational "pick-up" at this point was the work of a "rustler" in the fall of 1887. Major Wamb, United States Paymaster, had driven up in an ambulance with an escort. The air was biting cold and the paymaster went into the ranch house, accompanied by most of his escort, leaving a cavalryman to stand guard. Presently the aromatic odor of onions and venison stole out upon the air, and Harris came to the door and shouted "all hands for grub." The stableman lost no time in getting there; the shivering soldier scanned the country for miles around; not a man in sight. He walked toward the door; just as his hand touched the latch he heard the sound of horse's feet. Out from the stable yard like a flash came a slender young horseman, holding in one hand a small grip sack, in it was $15,000 pay for soldiers that had been left in the ambulance. Away went the horseman with speed of the wind, up came the carbine to the soldier's shoulder, the benumbed fingers pulled the trigger, the bullet was buried in the dust at the flying feet of the horse. There was a rush of men from the house, then another rush for arms, all the work of a minute perhaps, but the horseman was off at long range, zigzagging in his course in a style that made sights and wind gauges superfluous. Whiz, zip, whiz went the bullets of a fusillade; the soldiers were shooting to save salary, but in vain; the daring rider only waved a defiant gesture of abomination as he rode over the ridge. Before the horses in the distant corral could get their loosened cinches tightened the robber was over the hills and off toward the mountain fastnesses and was not heard from until two years later in Nebraska, where a small fraction of the money was recovered.

That night we slept on the ground, as neighbor Harris' hogs were most attentive and inquisitive. The Captain broke two clubs over one razor back's head, and then dutifully tried to rest with a bunch of cactus stuck in his heel like a natural spur, a painful souvenir of his reckless barefoot charge in the dark. In the morning the porkers were just as naive and frisky as ever.

The camp was up betimes next morning, and we were off early in a southerly direction. Toward noon we left the stage-road and turned southeast. In the afternoon we saw several bands of antelope, and the Captain threw up the dust around them at 1,200 yards, hoping to bring them our way, but with a reckless disregard for his wishes they turned tail in the other direction. Frank Grouard started after them, and we saw no more of him until that night, when he came into camp with two fat prongs.



FRANK GROUARD'S "ROUND-UP."

Hunters relate strange experiences about the curiosity of the antelope when flagged with a red handkerchief, or when panicky how they circle about the shooter as a moth about a candle. Frank Grouard once shot twenty-nine antelope out of a circling bunch; but their present familiarity with the hunter has evidently cured them of their verdancy. Now they are as sharp as newsboys, and instead of cutting circus didos they move off steadily in a long line without manifesting the pioneer spirit of accommodation for the benefit of the hunter, and when they get a commanding position of four or five miles stop and wink the other eye.

Next day we hunted in earnest, the captain and correspondent followed the sun toward the west, Frank Grouard and Lieutenant Rhodes crossed the river to the east, Professor B held the fort, and the cavalrymen scoured the country in all directions. How the game got away is a mystery, but it did. Following up the long draws on horseback we saw many deer signs running toward the river, but the fleet and crafty animals were away back in the hills. There were many tracks of mountain lion, and occasionally a coyote would bark at us and turn tail as a bullet responded to his welcome. The first day was considered well spent in getting the lay of the land. Grouard, of course, managed to slay a pair of antelope and a deer, and encourage us with the fact that game was about.

HUNTING "ITEMS" AND ANTELOPES.

We were all in the saddle early the following morning. The captain bid "Jefferson Davis" farewell, leaving assurance that he would have deer meat for supper. Grouard, myself and Lieutenant Rhodes crossed the powder and were soon threading the labrynthian draws that led away from the river. Deer signs were quite thick. Grouard was slightly in advance, his keen eyes could find the track of a wild turkey in the sage grass, and could tell where a deer had trod during the previous forty-eight hours, picking the new out of a puzzling multitude of old tracks.

His gentle "sh, sh," and quick gesture of the hand indicates something new and warm. A little shadow flits up the canon. "There goes a deer, wait here," said the guide. Out of the gully and around it in S shape he circles. Crack goes his rifle; we ride up just as Grouard is dragging out a small body that looks like a goat. It is wild and wooly, quiet a young deer, and the guide pronounced it "the most curious thing" he had ever shot. A few minutes after he has skillfully carved the carcass, has the hams on his horse, and leaves the remains for the great golden eagle that is soaring, hungry overhead.

Two hours later we approach the brow of a high hill. "There are some deer over there," said the guide, pointing with his hand; "be careful." "Don't cock your gun!" We dismount, stake the lariated horses, and then half creeping, move toward the edge of the ridge. Now we are down on our hands and knees. "Careful, careful"—we peep over; the Lieutenant is in for it and excited, sure enough. Biff, bang, goes his carbine; up jump two bucks, magnificently antlered, and scud off down the hill toward the river with the speed of the wind. "Quick, to your horses," says Grouard, and suiting the action to the word he is on a stooping run for the animals, thirty yards away. Snatching out the pin and gathering in the lariat as he moves, he is on his horse very quickly. Your correspondent had to hustle, but managed to scramble into the saddle; with a "long Tom" (Springfield rifle) hanging out like the arm of a derrick in one hand and his lariat in the other he had his hands full. In fact, he had no chance to grasp the bridle, and his horse went down the incline after his fellows at a J. I. C. gait. Those two bucks went eight miles before Grouard's bullets laid them low, in the river bottom. The Captain had been lucky, and our party had managed to pile up a buckboard full of game, that was sent to Fort McKinney next day. Coming in that evening Lieut. Rhodes and myself had a wild chase through the timber, but the deer got away.

Again we are in an antelope country. The correspondent had been practicing with his rifle. The Lieutenant could down the ace of spades with his carbine at 200 yards, and he had as yet failed to down a deer or antelope. What hope had a poor tenderfoot! Grouard cheerfully said, "You will bring in an antelope to-day." A word like this from a prophet of the plains was inspiring. About 11 o'clock Grouard descried a band of antelope. We took a long circuit, and finally got within 200 yards of them, but firing simultaneously, each breaking an antelope's hind leg. Now to cut them off from the herd. It took hard riding, but the two wounded ones were laggards, and we turned them about. Then it was up hill and down dale for an hour. One of the animals disappeared as suddenly as if he had dropped in a hole in the ground. We kept on the jump after the other. Strange how an antelope can run and maneuver on three legs. This one kept us on the move, through prairie dog towns, droves of jack rabbits, up gullies and down hills for eight miles. But we gained on the antelope; he tried to play with my sympathies, but he was doomed. Grouard circled about the animal like a hawk, and filled the air with laughter. I fired several shots from horseback, and finally dismounted and resumed the chase on foot. I was warm; my blood was up, so was my rifle. I fired high—six shots. Finally my seventh broke his spine the antelope was mine. It was a matinee for Grouard; it was extremely exciting for me; it was a tragedy for the poor antelope. At any rate, I had shot the largest antelope of the outfit, and was crowned by a fine pair of horns. That night there was joy in my dreams.

One thing to be certain of is that game, in the wild West, does not hunt the hunter under the conditions that our party experienced. But a dozen antelope and fifteen deer should satisfy for a ten days' hunt.

CAPTAIN SCOTT TAKES AN INVENTORY.

NEVER let a wild-looking man get the drop on you with a valise.

THE KOLA NUT.

Can It Be Made to Take the Place of Tea and Coffee?

A well-known medical journal is recommending the kola nut as a substitute for tea and coffee. The nut, it is said, contains little tannin and not much more caffeine. It is claimed that it will soon take the place of tea and coffee entirely.

A botanist, who has made a special study of the nut and its properties, said to a Cincinnati Times-Star reporter: "It is a mistake to say that the nut will take the place of tea and coffee. It has an astringent taste that is unpleasant, and I do not believe that it will ever be used extensively, or at all, in civilized countries. The kola nut is a native of the coasts of Africa, but has been introduced into and thrives well in the West Indies and Brazil. It grows on a tree forty feet high, which produces pale yellow flowers spotted with purple. The leaves of the tree are six or eight inches long, and are pointed at both ends. The fruit consists of five long, slender pods radiating from a common center. One of these when broken open is found to contain several nuts somewhat similar to hazelnuts and of about the same size. The nuts are solid, being slightly softer toward the center than on the outside.

"The natives of the countries where the nuts grow use them for various purposes. They pass for money in Africa. They are also used as a symbol of friendship and hate, the light colored ones signifying the former, and the dark the latter. They are supposed to aid digestion, and it is the practice to chew a small bit before eating a meal. They allay thirst, and if a small piece be chewed and held in the mouth while drinking, the most bitter and stagnant water can be taken, and will taste sweet and agreeable. I doubt if this quality of rendering stagnant water pure is possible by the nuts. I rather think that the astringent taste of the nut paralyzes the gustatory nerves momentarily, and for that reason the water is not tasted. Hunger they are also supposed to allay, but they do no more than paralyze the nerves. They have a stimulating effect, and when going on long marches the natives chew bits of the nuts continually, and with about the same effect as if intoxicating liquor had been used, though without the same bad results. Powdered kola nut is sprinkled in cuts and wounds and has a healing effect.

"A chemical analysis of the nuts shows them to contain 20 parts of caffeine and but a fraction of a part of tannin. No, it will never be used in the place of tea and coffee. Its taste and chemical properties are against it."

Earthquakes in Japan.

During the nine years and six months preceding December, 1884, there had occurred in Japan, according to the official statement published by the government, 553 earthquakes, averaging one earthquake for every six days and six hours. Professor Milne was able to make the average even greater than this, according to a writer in the Illustrated American. He could trace an average of an earthquake per day in Nagasaki, in the extreme south of the Japanese Archipelago. Probably the official statistics were compiled from the returns of officials from all over the country, in which case only those shocks which caused loss of life or damage to property would be included. If this hypothesis be correct, we should have an average of more than one earthquake per week, which was so violent that it caused injuries to life or property sufficiently serious to attract the attention of the local authorities, and, in their judgement, to require a report to the central government.

Earthquakes being so common people scarcely notice them unless they be extraordinary severe ones. For instance, Miss Bird in her "Unbeaten Tracks" thus summarily dismisses two: "While we were crossing the court there were two shocks of earthquake; all the golden wind bells which fringe the roofs rang softly, and a number of priests ran into the temple and beat various kinds of drums for the space of half an hour."

As every one knows, Japan is the very hearth of earthquakes. In 1854 more than sixty thousand people lost their lives in consequence of one of these great terrestial catastrophes, and it has been calculated that from ten to twelve earthquakes, each lasting several seconds, occur every year, besides numerous others of too light a nature to be worthy of remark.

Useful Insects.

Nearly all the lace-wings, which include the ant-lions, aphis-lions, dragon flies, etc., are a benefit, living wholly on other insects, and so help preserve our crops. Most of the locust order are destructive, yet even here we find the curious preying mantis, common at the South, with its jaw-like anterior legs, one of the first of predaceous insects. True, it attacks bees also, though it certainly does much more good than harm. Several bugs, like the great wheel bug and the soldier bug, feed exclusively on other insects.

Of the beetles, the beautifully spotted lady-bird beetle, the black, long-legged ground beetles, the quick, fierce tiger beetles, and a few others, are valuable aids in holding our insect pests in check. One may repeatedly see the grubs of the ground beetles eating cut-worms. The good work of the pretty lady-bird beetles in destroying the pestiferous plant lice can hardly be too much appreciated. Of the two-winged flies we have the tachina flies, which are internal parasites on other insects; they resemble in form and color the house flies, to which they are closely related. These also prey upon cut-worms, laying their eggs on the caterpillars, and, as these eggs hatch, the maggots eat into their host and destroy its life.

Two other families of two-winged flies do much good in eating other insects. The robber flies are so fierce and strong they destroy even the honey bee, while the conical maggot of the pretty yellow-banded syrphus flies feed upon the plant lice to an extent surpassed by few other insects; they are nearly or quite equal to the lady-bird beetles as aphis destroyers.

Among the highest order of insects—the one that includes the bees and wasps—we have the ichnuemon flies and the chalcids—wasp-like insects that are parasites and do incomparable good. They are of all sizes and prey upon almost all kinds of insects. They are far more helpful to the farmer than are the tachina flies. They saved the wheat crop in Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana in 1889. The wasps also belong to this order, and do much good; indeed, we think we may say that the wasps are only our friends. They are dreaded needlessly, for, unmolested, they rarely, if ever, sting. We have seen wasps carry off slugs and tent caterpillars in great numbers. Every farmer should become acquainted with these friends and learn their habits, that he may help—not hinder—their good work.—Great Divide.

Came Back in a Saucer.

When I was in Atlanta, Ga., some time ago, said Mr. Constine, I was invited by a friend to visit a peach cannery in which he was employed. After I had completed my tour of the cannery I missed a valuable charm that I had been wearing on my watch-chain. I was sorry to lose it, for it was the gift of a dead sister. I offered a liberal reward, but to no purpose. I returned home, and gave up all hope of recovering it. About two months ago I came to the Pacific coast on business. I arrived in Seattle about two weeks ago, since which time I have been visiting friends who live near Yesler avenue.

Yesterday noon I was down town and stepped into a restaurant for lunch. After eating a very hearty lunch I called for peaches and cream. I started to eat the peaches, and was in the act of cutting one when the spoon struck some hard substance. I worked the substance out and held it up to the light. It was my missing charm.

The story is a strange one, and I certainly should hardly be willing to believe it myself if it were told to me by a stranger, but nevertheless every word of it is strictly true. The only way I can account for the mysterious disappearance and recovery of the jewel is that it became detached when I was watching the operation of a new coring and paring machine in which I was much interested, and fell among the peaches without my noting it and was thus strangely recovered.

The Porcupine.

Who has not heard the backwoods hunter entertain his open-mouthed and equally as ignorant audience with stories of our "gentle and inoffensive" porcupine, who "threw his quills until the dogs were covered and left in disgust, howling with pain," or some other "bosh" to the same effect. How positively he makes the assertion. There can be no doubt that hunters of this ilk frequently say "bear" when they have seen nothing more formidable than a harmless "ground-hog." Nature armored our porcupine in a manner that, when excited and with spines raised, woe to the quadruped or biped either, for that matter, who comes in contact with this bundle of prickers. "Porky's" body is covered with a thick layer of fat, in which the quills or spines are rather insecurely fastened. Each spine has a set of minute barbs at the outer end. But touch a spine and it sticks, and can only be removed by force. A dog or fox that lacks experience and undertakes a meal at the porcupine's expense usually ends by filling with spines not only his mouth, but his head and paws as well, and not unfrequently death results from his temerity.—Great Divide.

The Skin of a Mighty Grizzly.

There is a bear skin on exhibition in Hudson's gun store that takes the cake. It is nine and a half feet in length and eight and a half across in the widest place. The bear that wore this skin was a grizzly and he lived in far-off Alaska. Judging from the size of the skin he must have been as large as two ordinary cows and could not have weighed less than 2,500 pounds. It is by far the largest bear skin that has ever been seen in Portland, and even old bear hunters who are told of its dimensions shake their heads in an incredulous manner until they see it with their own eyes.—Portland Oregonian.

South American Railroads.

Railroads did not begin in South America until 1864, but in the little more than quarter of a century that has since elapsed their growth has been extraordinarily rapid. Brazil has now 6,000 miles of railroad in operation, and several thousand more in course of construction or planned. Great rivers favorable to navigation traverse the best parts of the continent, so that the facilities for communication are even better than the railroads constructed would indicate.

Black Pearls.

Black pearls are exceedingly rare, hence desirable. The reader may not know that black pearls are not really black, but vary in hue; some have a shimmering blue light on their surface, while others appear to be green or gray. This harmonious blending of subtle tints gives great value to the gems